

REMARKS/ARGUMENTS

Favorable reconsideration of this application as presently amended and in light of the following discussion is respectfully requested.

Claims 4-9, 18-19 and 23-25 are pending, Claims 7, 19 and 23 having been amended, and Claims 1-3, 10-17, 20-22 and 26-33 having been canceled without prejudice or disclaimer by way of the present amendment.

In the outstanding Office Action the Abstract was objected to; Claims 1, 7, 16, 17, 19, 20 and 26 were objected to as containing informalities; Claims 21, 22 and 28-30 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 112, second paragraph; Claim 26 was rejected as being anticipated by Aso et al. (U.S. Patent Publication 200/0007509, hereinafter Aso); Claim 27 was rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Aso; Claims 1-3, 10-17, 20, 21/20, 22/20, and 25/20 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over the April 2000 ELECTRONIC LETTERS article submitted by Aso et al.; Claims 28-30 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Mollenauer (U.S. Patent No. 4,881,790); and Claims 31-33 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Shukunami et al. (U.S. Patent No. 6,529,314).

In reply, Applicants appreciate the Examiner's acknowledgement of allowable subject matter.

In view of the indication of allowable subject matter and in order to expedite prosecution, Applicants have canceled each of the claims rejected over prior art (namely Claims 1-3, 10-17, 20-22 and 26-33). The informalities identified in the outstanding Office Action with regard to the allowable claims have been corrected herewith. In particular, Claims 7 and 19 have been amended, and Claims 23 and 25 have been amended to depend only from Claim 19.

As requested, the Abstract of the Disclosure has been amended to correct the informalities.

Consequently, in view of the indication of allowable subject matter and amendments made to correct informalities in the allowable claims, it is respectfully submitted that the invention defined by Claims 4-9, 18-19, and 23-25, as amended, is definite and patentably distinguishing over the prior art. The present application is therefore believed to be in condition for formal allowance and an early and favorable reconsideration of this application is therefore requested.

Respectfully submitted,

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